had been devoting their attention solely to the town leaving the rural area to take care of itself.

Dewan's reply.—I would request you to take me to the several places where you say roads should be improved or constructed or taken over by the Government and also to some of the important irrigation works to which you have made reference. I shall be happy to go with you and see these things for myself. I am aware of the fact that the Trivandrum taluk is one of the poorest taluks in the State, and that conditions in regard to irrigation here are very similar to those prevailing in the Neyattinkara, Vilavankod and other adjoining taluks. You say that this is due to want of sympathy and to callousness on the part of Government. I rather think that it is due to the want of method and the policy of drift which seem to have characterised minor irrigation in the State. You are quite right when you say that Government must take the initiative in the matter. I have already indicated my policy in regard to minor irrigation in reply to seveal speakers, and, if we pursue that policy, at the same time remembering that the Irrigation Regulation affords ample opportunity for giving effect to that policy and also for bringing into play a spirit of co-operation among the people, I think that the minor irrigation works in this country are bound to improve. I shall try to pursue that policy to the best of my opportunity.

I entirely agree with you in regard to the Committee suggested by you. I shall issue orders for the appointment of a Committee to look into the several needs of minor irrigation in this taluk.

A Committee would be a very useful thing for arranging the works in the order of urgency, for considering the cost of individual works, and for suggesting how far it would be possible for the people to co-operate with the Government in the matter. I trust that the ryots will co-operate to the fullest extent. I do not believe in a separate Department for minor works. I think that with the co-operation of the people, the Public Works Department can itself attend to all minor and major irrigaton works. In regard to petty irrigation works, it is a thing which the ryots have to do entirely themselves. Government can only give them guidance and advice.

In regard to encroachments, we have appointed Assistant Tahsildars to bring them to notice and to remove them. If these encroachments have not been repressed already, Government hope they will be repressed steadily, and the old channels, water communications and roads which tend to public convenience will be restored to their original dimensions.

64. Certain suggestions for the improvement of the town of Trivandrum.

Mr. P. Padmanabha Pillai B. A., B. L. (Member, Municipal Council, Trivandrum) began by thanking the Dewan for allowing the members to address from the *dais* where the Dewan and the Officers were seated and for the patient hearing and sympathetic replies the Dewan was giving, and more particularly for the observation made by the Dewan that, as long as he was in Travancore, he would be as much a Travancorean as any of them in the Assembly.

The Member's representations mainly related to (1) the thorough overhauling of the drainage system in the town; (2) the improvement of public tanks; (3) the levelling up and conversion of the Putherikandam fields; and (4) the construction of a commodious and convenient hall for holding public meetings suited to present-day requirements.

Speaking generally of the several towns in the State, the Member stated that Trivandrum, as the capital town, deserved special treatment, and the Trivandrum Municipality as the premier Municipality had a claim to a decent portion of the State funds being spent on its needs.

Coming to the question of drainage, the Member said that, with an area of 10·69 square miles and a population of 72,809, as per the Census of 1921, the question of the health and sanitation of the town had assumed an important aspect requiring special consideration.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The three standing menaces to public health in the town were, in the Member's opinion, (1) the Putherikandam fields which formed the nursery of all kinds of diseases; (2) the defects and imperfections in the drainage system; and (3) the deplorably neglected condition of public tanks and wells. The necessity of immediately levelling up and converting the Putherikandam fields into an open public place had been pressed on the attention of Government, the first move in this direction having been made by the Chief Engineer himself. These fields are situated near H. H. The Maha Raja's Palace and in the midst of a prominent, populous and much frequented part of the town, and time and again, the Municipal Council had been considering the supreme importance of the question. Although Government stated in May 1921 that the matter was under reference with the Chief Engineer and that his estimate was awaited, nothing had been done as yet. The Member condemned in strong terms the existence of this nuisance in the heart of the town, stating that it was both a disgrace and a scandal to the custodians of public health and sanitation in the town and he prayed that the matter might receive the early and earnest attention of Government. He pointed out that earth for filling up the fields could be easily obtained from the Puthenkotta hills which lie on the road-side, at a distance of hardly half a mile from the fields.

Coming to drainage, the Member pointed out the main defects in the present system and complained that nothing had been done on the report of the special officer appointed by Government in this direction, though the report was submitted to Government so long ago as 1917. He also quoted at length from a letter addressed to the Municipal Council by the Municipal Health Officer on the present system of drainage in which he had suggested that an expert Sanitary Engineer should be appointed for a short period to take a survey of the town and submit schemes and plans for the organisation of a scientific system of drainage for the town. He also stated that the construction of drains here and there was useless, being unconnected with one another and incapable of being properly flushed.

The Member then referred to five particular places at Chalai and Manakkad which suffered from a system of bad drainage. He suggested the allotment of a lump sum and the appointment of a competent officer of the Public Works Department with knowledge of Sanitary Engineering to attend to the matter in consultation with the Municipal Council whose views should be considered whenever an existing drain was to be repaired or a new one constructed.

As for the improvement of the public tanks and wells, the Member said that the opinion of the Government that it should be attended to by Municipal Councils was not in consonance with the resolutions arrived at in the Municipal Conference held under the presidency of the Dewan and that in conformity with those decisions the Trivandrum Municipality deserved special treatment. He also stated that the financial condition of the Council was not sufficiently elastic and did not allow of such improvements being carried out from municipal funds.

The Member suggested that the Puthenkulam near the Srivaraham latrine and the Kollankulam near the Gas House, both of which were insanitary, should be filled up, and that the following public tanks should be improved by the Public Works Department, at least for the time being, till the financial condition of the Municipality improved:—(1) the old tank lying at the north-western corner of the Karamanai Krishnancoil street; (2) the Brick-field tank at Tampanur; (3) the Mitranandapuram tank within the Fort and Oorukulam near the Commandant's Bungalow.

The next subject referred to by the Member was the congestion of traffic on the Chalai main road. The traffic on the road being very heavy, and it being not possible to widen the road, he suggested that the Cochar be covered up from the Chempupanippura junction to the Pazhavangadi junction as, in that case, the Cochar road could be made broad and useful and a large portion of the traffic on the Chalai road could be diverted from Chalai, besides removing the present insanitary condition of the Cochar side of the town where good buildings and shops were likely to crop up. This had been urged on the attention of Government by the Council so long ago as

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Karkadakam 1091. He then suggested the metalling of the Cochar road and the Tampanur road and stated that the channel leading from Putherikandam along Pazhavangadi, Kutiravattam, etc., and terminating at Kannamulai should either be cleared of rank vegetation and kept in good condition or covered up, thus removing another source of insanitation.

The Member also spoke about the desirability of constructing a commodious and convenient Public Hall for holding public meetings, suited to the present-day requirements of the town. He said that the Victoria Jubilee Town Hall was the only Hall now available; but it was incommodious, as evidenced by the inconvenience experienced even during the Assembly Session. If the Hall could be extended, the Member said that it would be well and good.

Lastly, the Member suggested the desirability of extending the railway to the heart of the town, as the present location of the Railway Station far away from the town was very inconvenient and caused much waste of money and time.

Dewan's reply.—I must thank you for the pains you have taken in bringing to the notice of Government the chief sanitary and other defects in Trivandrum. I do not quarrel with the principle which was laid down at the First Municipal Conference that Trivandrum should receive exceptional treatment on the ground that it is the capital where His Highness the Maha Raja resides, and from which all good influences must flow to the outlying parts of the State. As a matter of fact, Trivandrum has been receiving exceptional treatment. Whether it should receive exceptional treatment in a larger measure is a question of finance. You yourself said that Municipal finance was not elastic and the finances of the State also unfortunately were not elastic just now. I was not aware of the fact that Mr. Natesa Aiyar had submitted a drainage scheme for the town. I shall look into that scheme. As you know, no drainage scheme can be scientifically perfect without a water supply scheme. The investigation of the latter scheme was finished a couple of months back and the report has just been received. I have not had the time to look into that report. But I understand from Mr. Jacob that the cost of the scheme would be about 50 lakhs of rupees. The report will have to be first read, and if the report is acceptable, then the question of finance will have to be tackled. 50 lakhs is a staggering figure.

I was not aware that the Chief Engineer had recommended the filling up of the Putherikandam lands. But I was struck with the prominent situation of these lands and I asked the Chief Engineer whether they could not be filled up, with sea sand brought in motor lorries. The Chief Engineer told me some months back that the compensation to be paid for acquiring the portion of the lands not belonging to Government would exceed one lakh of rupees. The matter is under correspondence with the Revenue Department.

In regard to the drains mentioned by you, I shall be very glad to inspect them. I shall be very glad to go out with the Municipal Councillors whenever I can find time and inspect the town. I also welcome conferences or consultations with the Municipal Councillors and with the engineering authorities and with the Municipal President and the Health Officer not only in regard to matters which require attention, but also to see how to do things at the minimum cost. For instance, the filling up of tanks is a costly matter. But if we could sell some of the tank sites after filling them up, we could reimburse ourselves. I should like to have constructive proposals.

In regard to covering the Cochar, I have received an estimate. It comes to about Rs. 68,000. The cost is prohibitive. It is also doubtful whether covering the channel is sanitarily desirable. If you cover a big channel more than a mile long, the chances are that all sorts of filth will get in. We shall have to provide man-holes.

In regard to a Town Hall, that is a matter which must come last in comparison with the other needs of the town. It is not quite so urgent.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly